

Wondertooneel Women and Museums

Learning Leaflet: Women in Science
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Levinus Vincent, *Wondertooneel der Nature* ("Wonder Chambers of Nature"; Amsterdam, 1706-1715)

Exhibit: Galileo's World | Gallery: The Scientific Revolution | No.: 8

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How many women do you see in Vincent's museum?





Wondertooneel: Women and Museums

Levinus Vincent, a wealthy Dutch merchant with ties to the East Indies, created a spectacular 'Chamber of Wonders' natural history museum in Haarlem. Visiting dignitaries admired his museum, including Peter the Great and King Charles III of Spain.

The detailed depictions of interior spaces include figures of women visitors. Museums such as Vincent's offered women opportunities for participation in the natural sciences as donors, collectors, discoverers, visitors, patrons, lecturers and even curators.

Although they were not admitted to the universities, women played a foundational role in that alternative educational space, the museum. While many discoveries bear the names of men attached to them, it is more accurate to regard scientific discovery as the result of hidden communities, and in these communities we will always find women.

Kerry Magruder

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